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were loaned to the bureau by the War Department as an emergency measure when the bureau was created. The War Department has suggested that it now needs these buildings and it is felt the bureau can not retain possession much longer. The buildings are very old and are entirely unsuited to the needs of the Bureau of Mines work. It is said that the investigations have been seriously handicapped by the inadequacy of the structures now in use.

THE FUR-SEAL COMMISSION

THE President of the United States and the Secretary of Commerce have approved the recommendation of the Commissioner of Fisheries for the appointment of a special fur-seal commission, to visit the Pribilof Islands during the present season for the purpose of advising the government as to the condition of the seal herd and of making recommendations regarding the policy that should be adopted with reference thereto.

The members of the commission, in accordance with the suggestion of the Commissioner of Fisheries, have been selected by outside agencies and have had no previous connection with the fur-seal controversy.

In response to a request that a duly qualified assistant of the Department of Agriculture, versed in the breeding and other habits of wild and domestic animals, be designated to serve as a member of the commission, Mr. Edward A. Preble, assistant biologist of the Bureau of Biological Survey, has been nominated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution was requested to name, as a second member of the commission, a person duly qualified to make a critical study of the economic relations and obligations of the government toward the fur-seal herd, the natives of the seal islands, and the fur trade. Mr. Wilfred H. Osgood, of the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, has been chosen for this purpose.

The President invoked the National Academy of Sciences to nominate as a third member of the commission a person qualified to study

the scientific and economic questions involved in the administration of the seal herd; and Dr. George H. Parker, of Harvard University, has been duly nominated.

Arrangements have been made for sending the commissioners to and from the seal islands on a revenue cutter; they will arrive in the latter part of June and will remain until the second week in August, thus covering the most critical periods of the land life of the seals.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE spring meeting of the council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science will be held at the Cosmos Club, Washington, D. C., on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 21, at 4:45 o'clock.

At the general meeting of the American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia from April 23 to 25, there will be presented to the society a portrait of the late Samuel Pierpont Langley, a former vice-president.

As has already been noted in *SCIENCE*, the American Chemical Society is holding its spring meeting at Cincinnati, Ohio, during the present week. Each of the sections has a full and important program. At the general session on the first day, after addresses of welcome by the mayor of the city and the president of the University of Cincinnati, and a reply by the president of the society, Professor Theodore W. Richards, the following papers were announced: Arthur L. Day, "The Chemical Problems of an Active Volcano"; L. J. Henderson, "The Chemical Fitness of the World for Life"; W. D. Bancroft, "Flame Reactions"; Irving Langmuir, "Chemical Reactions at Low Pressures."

A PORTRAIT of Sir William Ramsay, painted by Mr. Mark Milbanke, has been presented to University College, London, by former colleagues and past students. Professor J. Norman Collie made the address. A replica of the portrait has been presented to Lady Ramsay.

PROFESSOR JOHN F. DOWNEY, dean of the college of science, literature and the arts, of the University of Minnesota and professor of